

## Chapter One Childcare – Kirk Brae Day Care of Children

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
16 March 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Chapter One Childcare

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004006695

**Service no:**  
CS2004073868

## About the service

Chapter One Childcare - Kirkbrae is registered to provide a care service to a maximum of 35 children at any one time between birth and primary school entry of whom a maximum of 15 are under the age of two.

The nursery is run from a large house, situated in a residential area of Liberton, in the South east of the city of Edinburgh. The nursery accommodates babies and toddlers from the first floor and pre-school children on the ground floor of the house.

The aims of the service include:

- We aim to be different and provide children with a hands on approach to learning.
- By trying and doing, instead of hearing and seeing. For the children to lead their play and experiences and for us to provide a safe and naturally stimulating environment.
- For our children to become confident, responsible, effective and successful in all they set out to do.
- To work in partnership and consult with other professionals, our parents and our young learners.
- To extend the hands on learning approach to our staff teams with encouragement for self-development and training.

This was a focussed inspection to evaluate how well children were being supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of children experiencing care during the pandemic.

This inspection was carried out by an inspector from the Care Inspectorate. Two visits were made to the service. Virtual observations of the service were carried out. Conversations with parents, staff and management were also carried out virtually.

## What people told us

We had contact with twelve parents whose children used the service. The majority of the parents were positive about the service provided, although some parents raised issues which could be improved upon. Their comments included:

- 'The staff have succeeded in maintaining an environment where children can play normally and happily without being overly aware of the pandemic, I feel this is the most important thing for young children at this time.'
- 'The drop off and pick up routines were explained clearly to me.'
- 'Communication from the nursery comes either via email, or on the nursery's private facebook page. Any time there has been a change in procedure (for example when the nursery was required to close to anyone other than key-worker children) this has been communicated quickly and clearly.'
- 'Parents have been kept updated of changes to the policies and procedures. As the first lock-down ended we were sent a detailed list of identified risks and mitigation of those risks, including government guidelines, to prepare us for the changes at the nursery.'
- 'More frequent learning outcomes online would be appreciated. Would be good for the daily reports to focus on activities done rather than just sleep and nappy changes.'
- 'My child has recently moved rooms and I understand she is settling well in the pre-school room. I do wish we had been able to do a longer transition period between Tweenies and pre-school, and had some greater communication about the change, but this has not appeared to hinder her at all and seems to be getting on great.'

-'There was no request for information about my daughter after lockdown. Previously I had used the Learning Journal app to record updates from home but there was never any indication it was read so I didn't do it this time. We were asked to update our information (eg contact details) but nothing pertaining to the social or educational wellbeing of the children.'

## From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	2 - Weak
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

2 - Weak

**Quality indicator 5.1: Children's health and wellbeing are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19.**

Children are nurtured and supported throughout their changed experience in their early learning and childcare setting.

**Effective communication with families enables responsive care to support children through changing circumstances.**

We found the service was operating at an adequate level in relation to 5.1

Children had positive, nurturing relationships with most staff, as it was a small setting, staff knew most of the children throughout the nursery, this created a friendly homely environment.

Insufficient information was gathered and all personal plans were not up to date to allow staff to know and meet the needs of the children. This meant that staff could not sufficiently take account of the impact of COVID-19 changes on children's emotional well being. Staff working with children were not always involved in updating information about them. Strategies for children set out in care plans were not always followed by staff. This meant that there was inconsistency for children in the care they received and their needs were not always being met. (See area for improvement one)

We saw some positive experiences for the younger children when staff sat and read with them and provided creative opportunities for children. We saw instances where some children were not appropriately comforted when upset. Although staff ratios were met, at times staffing levels was not sufficient to meet the needs of the younger children. Some staff did not have the skills, knowledge and understanding in child development to ensure outcomes for children were as positive as possible. For example there was a lack of stimulating language which could impact on language acquisition. Additional resources were required to provide a more stimulating activities for children in the toddler room. The outdoor area needed to be enhanced to provide meaningful play opportunities. (See area for improvement two)

Children in the preschool room had increased opportunities for outdoor play and the area had been enhanced with increased activities and resources. Children in the pre-school room benefited from staff who empowered them through the use of higher order thinking skills which promoted creativity, enquiry and problem solving.

**Quality indicator 5.2: Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff.**

During COVID-19, the application of strict infection control procedures are important to keep people safe. We found that staff practice within the service was weak and immediate improvements were required to maintain a safe environment.

During our inspection visit on 2 March 2021 we identified potential risks to children and staff in relation to cross infection. For example we identified:

- that children were not supported to wash their hands after coming in from the garden and prior to having lunch.

- poor practice in relation to infection prevention and control in general.

A requirement was made in respect of this and a serious concerns letter was issued to the service on 3 March 2021. The requirement is included further in this report.

When we visited on 5 March 2021 to follow up on the requirement we found that procedures had been put in place to rectify the issues. For example:

- children were now supported to wash their hands correctly. Staff had watched a hand washing video with children to demonstrate correct handwashing. Handwashing posters were displayed for children.
- additional poor practice in relation to infection control had been rectified.

This requirement was met and is reported on within 'What the service has done to meet any requirements at or since the last inspection'.

Information in relation to COVID 19 was shared with parents and what action they should take should they or their child become unwell. Parents said that they were kept up to date with current practice. Parents dropped off and picked up their children outside the nursery. Staff wore masks in communal areas and social distanced from each other. These procedures contributed to keeping children and staff safe.

Continued sustained improvement in respect of infection control is needed to ensure children are cared for in a safe environment.

### **Quality indicator 5.3: Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19.**

During this inspection we saw that staffing levels were not always sufficient to meet the needs of children, particularly in the younger age group of children. As a result children were not always appropriately comforted when upset.

Staff told us that a risk assessment had been completed with them prior to returning to work. They said that they felt supported and safe at work, as they were kept up to date with latest guidance from the manager. Staff would have benefited from support in following and understanding the guidance.

Staff were aware of current Scottish Government guidance on COVID 19 but at the first visit were not following guidance around handwashing and cleaning. There was no monitoring of staff practice in place. Staff received online training from the nursery's group manager about COVID 19 both prior to and after our visit. On our second visit staff were following guidance around handwashing. They were aware of what action they should take if they or a child in their care displayed symptoms of COVID 19. Staff were observing social distancing guidance when appropriate and sensitively supporting everyone to do the same.

Staff should be supported to improve their practice. This should include staff being informed about current best practice and being supported to put this in place. (see area for improvement three).

To promote consistency the service used regular agency staff who became familiar with the setting, children and parents. The manager was not following the company policy or guidance with regard to the use of agency staff during COVID 19. (see area for improvement four).

The manager had not been submitting all required notifications to the Care Inspectorate. Notifications allow us to provide support where needed, therefore we were unable to support the service. There was a lack of quality assurance within the setting to ensure that the company's policies and procedures and Scottish Government guidance in relation to COVID 19 was being carried out. (See area for improvement four).

Parents comments included :

- 'Staff have been brilliant. I think the staff have done an amazing job in what I can only imagine are very difficult circumstances. Individual staff members have remained truly professional and cheery every time I've seen them.'

- 'The staff care very much about the children and have attempted to adapt quickly to the ever-changing requirements of Covid without causing disruption or distress.'

- 'The staff have done a wonderful job in a very stressful and uncertain time.'

## Areas for improvement

1. To promote and support children's well-being and learning, improvements should be made to the way in which staff gather and record important information about children. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

2. To promote and support children's play, learning and development improvements should be made to the resources and activities available to the under threes. This should include the outdoor area. This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'As a child, I can direct my own play and activities in a way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.27)

3. To promote and support children's play, learning and development staff should be supported to develop and reflect on their practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14)

4. To contribute to the provision of a high quality service there should be monitoring of staff practice and management. This would demonstrate where staff and management required extra support or training. This would ensure that company policy and procedures were being followed as well as Scottish government guidance in relation to COVID 19.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'I receive high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11) and 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Requirements

#### Requirement 1

To ensure that children are cared for in a safe and hygienic environment, the provider, must by 4 March 2021 ensure that staff understand and implement Scottish Government Coronavirus (COVID 19) guidance with regard to Infection Prevention and Control. This is to comply with The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI/2011/210) Regulation 4 (1) (a) Make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users and Regulation 4 (1) (d) Where necessary, have appropriate procedures for the prevention and control of infection.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that:

'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishing and equipment.' (HSCS 5.22)

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11)

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14)

**This requirement was made on 3 March 2021.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

Children routinely washed their hands and were supported to do this properly. Handwashing posters and a timer had been introduced into the bathrooms. Children told us about a handwashing video they had watched and showed us how they washed their hands.

Infection prevention and control procedures had been put in place.

**Met - within timescales**

## Detailed evaluations

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	2 - Weak
5.1 Children's health and well being are supported and safeguarded during COVID-19	3 - Adequate
5.2 Infection prevention and control practices support a safe environment for children and staff	2 - Weak
5.3 Staffing arrangements are responsive to the changing needs of children during COVID-19	3 - Adequate



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